



THE NAVAJO NATION

RUSSELL BEGAYE PRESIDENT
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August 8, 2016

To the Public:

Per established requirement of the IV-B grant, the IV-B plan must be made available to the public and states that surround the Navajo Nation. Attached is a copy of the Navajo Nation Department of Family Services IV-B Plan. The plan is also available on our Department web-site @ nndss@navajo-nsn.gov for public view.

Please feel free to contact me for any questions or dialog at 928.871.6556 or email at gambrose@navajo-nsn.gov.

We continue to look forward to our continued collaboration and coordination of services.

Best Regards;

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TITLE IVB
Annual
Progress
Service
Report
(APSR)

FY 2016

FY

2016

Submitted by the Navajo Nation

Department of Family Services

Navajo Children and Family Services

Navajo Treatment Center for Children and their Families

DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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SERVICE DESCRIPTION

Report on the specific accomplishments and progress achieved in the past fiscal year to improve outcomes for children and families.

Safety

Goal #1: To prevent the neglect, abuse or exploitation of children living on the Navajo Nation by recognizing and reaffirming the duty of a parent/guardian for the safety, welfare, and guidance of their children.

Goal #2: To prevent child fatalities due to neglect and abuse on the Navajo Nation.

Goal #3: Use technology within the Navajo Nation child welfare system to improve the quality of services for children and families.

Goal #4: To protect children by taking action, offering services, making appropriate referrals and separating the child from parents and extended families only when necessary for the child's welfare or safety.

Objective(s):

1. On a yearly basis, make training and services available on child abuse and neglect prevention for all families living on the Navajo Nation.

The Department of Family Services (DFS) provides community based parenting education and training to the general public and to parents and caretakers to help improve their parenting skills. This includes understanding the definition and effects of child abuse, neglect and maltreatment. They are provided information on proper discipline and child developmental stages. Information regarding traditional cultural teachings and practices from the Navajo way of life and child rearing are shared with participants and classes are taught in the language preference of the participants either in Navajo or English. DFS provided training to 56 families (126 individuals) through this service.

DFS also provided in home based services through their family support services to provide child abuse and neglect prevention to families where children have been identified as "at risk" of abuse and neglect. On a one-on-one basis, workers are able to communicate and work with parents directly in an intensive setting to better educate parents on the prevention of child abuse and neglect. Through this service a total of 253 families were served.

Prevention Activities have been delivered within the schools where school children can be reached, parent teachers conferences to help families learn skills to be involved with their children education, health care centers where specific issues regarding child development, health of children.

Crownpoint DFS office has established a specific class reference to child abuse and neglect; one 2 hr. session every six weeks. A total of 32 classes were offered with participants of 132 people.

NCFS provided four Traditional Dine' Parenting Trainings for foster parents and potential adoptive families. A total of 50 participants were provided certificates of completion.

Prevention and Supportive services to the identified at risk families and generally increase the community awareness of child abuse and its impact has been a priority. Through these services, there was an increase reaching a total of 784 families.

2. On a yearly basis, provide outreach to the public to create awareness of detection, reporting and prevention of child maltreatment through media, newspaper, community involvement, coordination and dissemination of information material.

DFS also had a mass media campaign to provide information to the entire Navajo Nation on the prevention of child abuse, neglect and maltreatment by conducting special forums and messages on the several radio stations that airs throughout the Navajo Nation. The information shared included defining the cultural belief and practices of parents and interactions with their children from a Navajo perspective. Most of the forums were in the Navajo language and coincided with the traditional beliefs of parenting as a Navajo parent(s). These messages were conducted from October 2014 to June 2015, a total of 32 forums were completed and prerecorded messages aired two times per week for 36 weeks on protecting and caring for your child(ren).

All public awareness, outreach, education and trainings are provided by the Community Involvement Specialist (CIS), CPS workers, and Victim Advocates within the DFS field offices to provide child abuse prevention activities. Child Abuse Prevention information and program information is disseminated to the public during the April Child Abuse Prevention Month and other community events. Other means to address the issues of child abuse & neglect are through the Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) and Child Protection Team (CPT) meetings, Children's Review Board Meetings, Community presentations with NN Head Start, Schools, Hospitals, Prosecutor's Office, trainings with the Judicial system which includes Judges and prosecutors.

These activities described above are ongoing with the only addition of adding another radio station; KNDN located on the Northern side of the reservation. The capacity to reach more people via media increases awareness of child abuse and neglect.

3. By Year 1, establish a child welfare case management system to store and collect data relating to families and children receiving DSS services which would include a centralized intake system and communication between vital stakeholder agencies.

In January 2014, the Division of Social Services (DSS) began developing their own Case Management System based on a program called JustWare that was currently being utilized by the Navajo Nation Courts. A software company, New Dawn Technologies, now called Journal Technologies, Inc. was contracted to help Department of Family Services, Navajo Children and Family Services (NCFS) and Navajo Treatment for Children and their Families (NTCCF) built one System where all data and client information would be stored in one database and could track clients receiving services from any of the three Division of Social Services programs. The software was developed and configured by staff within the DSS Programs and little reliance was put on the contractor except for the training to learn to configure programming language. The Navajo Department of Information Technology was the lead

project manager due to their expertise in the information technology field. One of the challenges DSS programs face is the cost associated with building the system and location of field offices throughout the Navajo Nation where there are no internet or communications. We have to work with several different options to have all the field offices and programs connected to one location in Window Rock, AZ.

As of June 2015, the Navajo Children and Family Services (NCFS) Program has completed their system and have gone live and are using the system to input their client information and as new cases are coming in. NTCCF is also live, however, several of their offices are still waiting for connection but are able to gain access via a Virtual Private Network.

DFS which is the biggest DSS program amongst the three still has several components to finish before they could go live. They currently have modules built for their central intake system, child protective services, child case management and support services for children and families. Through this system, DFS will be able to determine a child's eligibility for IVE assistance. DFS will be also to generate reports on child abuse and neglect cases including the number of children in foster care, placement locations and much more. Although DFS is not live as of June 2015, two other programs are.

4. By Year 2, bring up to date all technology and equipment within DSS to improve data reporting and up to date case activities.

Due to the cost of purchasing equipment and developing the case management system, DFS has been slowly updating all child welfare staff's computers to be compatible with the JustWare Software. We are about 80% complete, there is 157 child welfare staff within DFS in 2015.

5. By Year 3, establish a Navajo Nation Child Fatality Review Team to advocate for public policy changes and to improve internal procedures.

Prior to 2015, Navajo Nation coordinated with the Apache County Child Fatality Review Team where several DFS staff attended and participated. Notice is provided to the Navajo Nation of any child fatality that occurs within the Jurisdiction of Navajo Nation. The County reviews the nature of the fatalities and determines if the fatalities could have been prevented and what actions would be required to decrease the number of fatalities as a result of abuse, negligence, accidents, suicide, manufacture malfunctions, etc. However, the County reviews all child fatalities within the county. The Nation has begun to establish their own review team by using the method used by Apache County. Currently, NN is awaiting a formal legislation process to obtain a Tribal Resolution to establish the Navajo Nation Child Fatality Review Team. DFS has one staff responsible for leading this initiative.

DFS is partnership with the Western Child Fatality Review Team, the only tribe who has a membership. Navajo Nation is still working to get an MOA/MOU with the state Department of Health to begin releasing death certificates to the Nation. Currently, there is no statute that will allow Navajo Nation access to this information. The Navajo Nation Department of Health currently does not have a vital records department where this information will be accessed.

6. By Year 5, development of a task group to work collaboratively with the State Medicaid Offices so DSS can gain access to the children's Medicaid eligibility

The Department of Family Services or any other DSS Programs has not begun to develop this task group, but plans to begin in FY 2016.

Measures of Progress:

- 1. On a yearly basis, reduce the rate of child abuse and neglect reoccurrence among children that are already involved in the child welfare system by 1% from the baseline data of FY 2012 of 26%.**

In 2014, DFS reported a reoccurrence rate of 21%, a significant decrease from 2012. DFS considers this accomplished.

- 2. On a yearly basis, decrease the number of child dependency cases through use of the Family and family group conferencing services from a baseline data of FY 2015.**

In 2014, DFS had a total of 332 out of home placements. A total of 167 family and family group conferencing were completed. DFS will use this information as the baseline for FY 2015 and compare to each new fiscal year.

In 2015 a total of 550 completed Family conferences, while there was a total of 408 Family Group Conferencing.

In 2015 there were a total of 1009 children in foster care, of the 1009; 120 children were in Licensed Relative Home, 127 children placed in licensed non-relative home, 587 children were placed in emergency shelters where the stay is short-term, while 175 are IV-E approved and receiving subsidies.

- 3. On a yearly basis, increase the percent of families served through the DFS Healthy Families Program from baseline data FY 2015.**

In 2014, the DFS Healthy Families Program served 123 families. DFS will use this information as the baseline for FY 2015 and compare to each new fiscal year. DFS may look at revising this measure to be specific to the four services area of Subpart 2 after FY 2016.

For FY2015 a total of families served through the Family Preservation Services were 178 families. A total of 229 families were served through the Time Limited Reunification Services. A total of 784 families were served through the Family Support Services.

For FY2015 NCFS-APSS received 97 new referrals. The services rendered include adoption application home studies, relative home studies, voluntary relinquishments/adoption services; and finding an adoptive home for Navajo children needing a permanent family.

For FY2015 NTCCF rendered services to 1,430 clients. A total of 1,264 treatment hours was delivered. The total hours 4,150.4 patient consultation were provided. A total of 236 intakes/assessments were completed. A total of 3,602 Prevention and Psychological education was provided throughout the Navajo Nation.

4. On a yearly basis, increase the percent of families served through the DSS-NCFS program community-based parenting education from the baseline data of FY 2015

The NCFS program hosted quarterly Dine Parenting Training sessions for Navajo adoptive and relative families and Navajo foster families. The purpose of the training is so these families can meet their requirements for their adoption certification or foster home licensure. The training consists of a unique Navajo traditional parenting practices and beliefs, so the participants are able to gain a more in-depth understanding and knowledge of Navajo culture and practices. There were 4 training sessions held thus far and 71 participants successfully completed the two day training sessions. NCFS will use this information as the baseline for FY 2015 and compare to each new fiscal year.

For FY2016 the NCFS-APSS conducted four Traditional Dine Parent Trainings throughout the year, one parenting trainings was held every quarter. There were a total of 50 participants who attended and received their certificate of completion. Participants consisted of potential adoptive parents and/or foster parents.

5. By Year 2, DSS programs serving children will be evident by a fully functional case management system in place and operating.

This is still in progress, it is estimated to be 80% completed in accordance with a four stage phase. First, being development, second configuration, third staff training and fourth, go live.

As of June 2016, the JustWare Case Management System completed the first, second, third and fourth phase. The JustWare Case Management went live for NCFS first, followed by NTCCF and DFS. System Matter Experts have been identified to assist with input at the field level. In addition there has been ongoing training for the field staff to satisfy as fully implemented. Follow up training and training of new staff will be ongoing activities.

Permanency

Goal #1: Achieve permanency through reunification, guardianship or adoption in a timely manner.

Goal #2: To immediately initiate visitations after removal to keep intact the parent/child relationships when there are no safety risk factors present.

Goal #3: To facilitate the on-going parent/legal guardian visitations as necessary to meet the needs of the child/ren.

Objective(s):

- 1. On a yearly basis, provide minimal financial support for foster homes/ relative care/ kinship adoptive homes to obtain, maintain or renew their license and provide adequate care for children placed in their custody.**

Most DFS field offices have essential supplies in stock to provide to caretakers in which a CPS child has been placed in their emergency care. This includes diapers, formula, bottles, blankets and clothing. In addition, DFS provides unlicensed relative/kinship caretakers additional financial support for children placed in their homes to purchase items for the child(ren) such as new beddings, mattresses, beds, clothing, sports equipment, additional living expenses and special transportation cost such as to medical appointments, etc. The maximum amount of assistance is \$1,000 one time while child is placed in their physical custody. In 2015, DFS assisted 23 unlicensed homes.

This service has allowed for children to be placed with relatives who would otherwise not be able to take custody due to the cost of living for the child(ren). Home studies are completed on every home a child is placed and recommendations are made to meet minimum standards of care for the children.

As of June 2016; DFS has assisted 93 caretakers with financial assistance to support with living expenses while a child is in care or with household items such as beds, dressers, mattress, clothing; etc. to make transition into care with maximum assistance of \$1,000.00 per child. Financial Assistance was also provided to families who were successfully reunited with their children after a lengthy stay in out of home care to assist with reestablishing a home environment with maximum assistance of \$500.00. To assist with licensure of care providers, efforts were made to assist with meeting licensing requirements. The total of thirty two (32) fire extinguishers were purchased and provided to foster families to meet OSHA requirements.

2. On a yearly basis, provide training to DFS staff to support and strengthen the implementation of concurrent planning.

DFS allows child welfare workers to attend trainings, workshops and conferences to enhance their child welfare knowledge. However, DFS has not provided any concurrent planning training, but will be conducting training in 2016.

As of June of 2016 there was training conducted on concurrent planning held at the Twin Arrows Casino with another scheduled for 2017 as a refresher course and/or for new employees.

3. By Year 2, develop standards for licensing therapeutic foster homes.

In 2015, DFS has the ability to license Navajo Nation foster homes, but continues to utilize the State of Arizona's therapeutic foster homes for special need foster children. DFS has begun exploring this option by researching the requirements needed to license our own therapeutic foster homes. Having our own therapeutic homes would be most beneficial so children do not leave the reservation and live three to six hours away from their home Navajo community.

Navajo Nation continues to utilize the states therapeutic foster homes because the Nation has not been able to establish any license of a qualified therapeutic foster home. The Nation will be accomplished in year 3.

4. By Year 3, conduct an assessment of establishing a kinship navigator service to conduct relative search for children in out of home care.

DFS has not begun the assessment in 2015, but will be looking in 2016 to begin the assessment for the establishment of a kinship navigator services.

DFS has is looking to accomplished this goal in year three (3) with the full implementation of the JustWare Case Management System, DFS will be able to navigate to conduct search.

5. By Year 5, develop and establish a foster care reimbursement rate for Navajo Nation.

DFS has been researching and reviewing the steps necessary to establish a foster care rate for the Navajo Nation. In 2015, DFS continued to use the three surrounding State's foster care rate depending on where a child was domiciled.

At the end of June 2016; The Navajo Nation established one foster care rate which went into effect on January 2015.

Measures of Progress:

1. On a yearly basis, reduce the percentage of children in out of home placements by .5% of the FY 2015 baseline data.

In 2014, there were a total of 332 out of home placements inclusive of placements, unlicensed relative care, foster care, group home and emergency shelter care. DFS will use this information as the baseline for FY 2015 and compare to each new fiscal year.

At the end of FY 2015; there was a total of 1009 out of home placement either in an unlicensed relative care, foster care, group, and emergency shelter care. This is increase in the number of children in out of home care; however this number includes not only children in foster care but children in guardianship and children who have adopted.

2. On a yearly basis, reduce the length of time children from 0-5 years of age are in out of home placements by .5% of the FY 2015 baseline data

In 2015, DFS was unable to track and report on the length of time children from 0-5 years of age are out of home placements. This was to be accomplished by revising our manual reporting processing, however due to other changes needing to be made to our reporting format, it was delayed. With our new Case Management System coming into effect on 10/01/15, focus has been on implementing these new reports into the system.

At the end of June 2016, DFS was still unable to track and report on the length of time children ages 0-5 are in out of home care. DFS has established and implemented the JustWare to obtain the number of children 0-5 that are placement and be able to track how long they will be in care.

~~3. On a yearly basis, reduce the length of time children are in out of home placements by .5% of the FY 2015 baseline data.~~

~~In 2015, DFS was unable to track and report on the length of time children are out of home placements. This was to be accomplished by revising our manual reporting processing, however due to other changes needing to be made to our reporting format, it was delayed. With our new Case Management System coming into effect on 10/01/15, focus has been on implementing these new reports into the system.~~

This statement is exactly the same as #2 therefore will strike.

6. By Year 5, increase the number of specialized and therapeutic foster homes on the Navajo Nation by 5% of the FY 2015 baseline data.

In 2015, DFS did not license any therapeutic foster homes do no establishment of licensing standards which is still in progress.

Well-Being

Goal #1: Incorporate the Diné language and culture into the practice of child welfare.

Goal #2: To preserve and restore the harmony and unity of the family by ensuring access to appropriate and cultural relevant services.

Goal #3: Create an independent and transitional living program to provide services to children who are likely to age out of the child welfare system up to the age 21.

Goal #4: Enhance and strengthen post placement support services after children have reached permanency.

Objective(s):

1. On a yearly basis, provide financial support services to children who have reached the age of 18 years while in out of home care needing to meet educational and living expenses.

DFS did not provide any support to children aging out of foster care/out of home placement for educational and living expenses. We were unable to determine the number of children aging out of placement through our manual reporting process. We will continue to provide information and training on the availability of services to field child welfare workers so they may begin utilizing this service.

2. On a bi-annual basis, provide appropriate training on Diné cultural and traditional values for DSS staff to apply when working with families.

This specific training component has not been completed due to having to properly plan on how this training will be provided to a large volume of staff. We will be conducting the training in FY 2016.

At the end of June 2015, there has been no child who has reached the age of majority where educational and living expenses assistance was provided. However, in the next few months going forward there are number of children who will be aging out of the system that will require the financial assistance.

At the end of June 2015, NCFS provided four Traditional Dine Parent training where the invitation was opened to NDSS staff. DFS has provided four training specific to cultural and traditional training provided by NTCCF and has incorporated as a breakout session during staff meetings.

3. By Year 1, establish an advisory team to provide feedback and recommendations on improving the child welfare system.

DFS was not able to initiate this objective due to the resignation of the identified project lead. Changes will be made to go change timeline from Year 1 to Year 3 and identify a new project lead.

By June 30, 2015, DFS was not able to initiate this objective; DFS will accomplish this goal by year three (3).

4. By Year 4, establish ~~Successful Adulthood independent living skills~~ to children who are ~~16~~14 years and older and in out of home care.

DFS has begun to initiate plans on developing this service. More effort will be focused on the new service through training and meeting with other state agencies on their implementation of this service. DFS also plans to begin exploring the option of applying for the Chafee Foster Care Independence and Education and Training Voucher Program. Some challenges include meeting the 20% match.

DFS has not been able to apply for the Chafee services but has focused on implementing the Prudent Parenting skills training to the Foster Care Handbook and is also included in parent skills training for those parents who are caring for children. By the end of June 30, 2016; a two day (2) parent skills training were provided every quarter in Chinle, Tuba City, Shiprock, Sanders, Dilkon, Crownpoint, Kayenta, Fort Defiance, Ganado, Tohaajillee, and Alamo. This approach was found to be successful in reaching communities at the most frontier area of the Navajo Nation.

Measures of Progress:

1. On a yearly basis, increase the percent of families with genograms completed by .5% of the baseline data of FY 2015.

In 2015, DFS was unable to track and report on the percent of families with genograms completed. This was to be accomplished by revising our manual reporting processing, however due to other changes needing to be made to our reporting format, it was delayed. With our new Case Management System coming into effect on 10/01/15, focus has been on implementing these new reports into the system.

The policies require Genograms are completed for every case as way to assess the dynamics of a given family. DFS finds this assessment tool to very helpful when conducting evaluations, families are able to visually see the dynamics as well.

2. On a yearly basis, report the number of families whose primary language is Navajo.

In 2015, DFS was unable to track and report on the number of families whose primary language is Navajo. This was to be accomplished by revising our manual reporting processing, however due to other changes needing to be made to our reporting format, it was delayed. With our new Case Management System coming into effect on 10/01/15, focus has been on implementing these new reports into the system.

By June 2016, DFS was not able to track and report the number of primary language of the family; however with the implementation of JustWare Case Management, the collected data includes the primary language that is spoken in the home. The data will not be collected electrically until year three.

3. On a yearly basis, increase the percent of participants receiving traditional Dine parent training by .5% of the baseline data for FY 2015.

In 2015, a total of 71 participants successfully completed the Dine Parenting training sessions. DSS will use this information as the baseline for FY 2015 and compare to each new fiscal year.

By end of June 30, 2015, a total of 50 participated and successfully completed the Dine Parenting training sessions which are slightly lower than the number from year 2014. We anticipate an increase for year three as the number of licensed foster homes.

4. By year 5, provide ~~independent and transitional living services~~ Successful Adulthood Services to 60% of children over the age of 14 16 years who is in out of home care.

DFS also plans to begin exploring the option of applying for the Chafee Foster Care Independence and Education and Training Voucher Program. Some challenges include meeting the 20% match.

➤ *How are you providing a more comprehensive, coordinated and effective child and family services continuum?*

- The DFS CPS workers and Child Case Managers participate in the CPT, MDT and Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect (SCAN) meetings throughout the Navajo Nation. The meetings are coordinated at the local level to address reports of child abuse and neglect. Team members are local organizations such a pediatrician from the local Indian Health Services, counselors from the Department of Behavioral Health Services, Criminal Investigators and Police Officers from Navajo Department of Law Enforcement, and teachers, counselors and nurses from Public, Private, Grant and Boarding schools within in the local area.
- The Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) is a meeting held once month with the US Attorney's Office, the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Victim Witness Coordinator, Navajo Nation, Law Enforcement, Indian Health Services, etc. where all cases of child sexual abuse and severe abuse of children are reported and reviewed.

- At the DSS Executive level an established “Nataani’s” Group consists of leaders from various Navajo Nation Divisions and Programs to address Child Welfare issues within the Navajo Nation. This group meets on a quarterly basis to resolve program collaboration issues and misunderstandings. The group developed a draft five year child welfare plan for the Navajo Nation and its members.
- The Department of Family Services also has an IGA (Intergovernmental Agreements) with the state of New Mexico, Utah and Arizona through which child welfare services are coordinated when a case is not an ICWA (Indian Child Welfare Act Case) we have a direct government to government relationship. Through this effort we are able to place children in state licensed foster home, courtesy home assessments conducted for consumers who are reported to the state CPS and vice versa, we are also able to place non Navajo children in licensed Navajo Nation Foster Home and coordinate the transfer of cases to the state. Quarterly meetings are held with the state and one tri-state meeting is held each year. This allows for discussions of what is working and what needs to be improved.
- The NCFS Program provided five recruitment drives and education activities to either the general public or a specific program. Some activities included having a program booth at tribal fairs or conducting program presentations at events on and off the reservation.

The above are ongoing activities as described, however there is a new initiative with Casey Families titled “Child Welfare Initiative Agreement” to specifically work in partnership to; 1) Develop and Implement a Data System, 2) Develop the Navajo Golden Rule Curriculum, 3) Increase the knowledge of all child welfare partners with on-going orientation and training on Title IV-E and other child welfare initiatives, 4) Increase Navajo leadership knowledge on Navajo, state and national child welfare initiatives and strategies and 5) Increase the role of Navajo birth parents and caretakers in program development and improvement projects.

NCFS Program provided five recruitment drives throughout the Navajo Nation. In addition, four radio broadcasts from KTNN were conducted not only to recruit for adoptive families, but also to educate the public about the APSS services. The broadcasts were conducted both in the Navajo and English language.

Report on the steps the tribe has taken to expand and strengthen the range of existing services.

- DFS continues to have 11 field offices throughout the Navajo Nation. All DFS services can be found in most of the field and suboffice. DFS suboffices are located in Pinon, AZ, Navajo Mountain, UT, and Kaibeto, AZ, these communities are considered to be several of the most remote and rural areas of the Nation. Until recently, these communities did not have cellular coverage.

- All three DSS Programs who serve the children in the child welfare system has strengthened its services by implementing it newly developed case management system. This web based service allows for the programs to provide case management services by entering case data information, email, scanning, calendars, and document referrals in the system. Services are expected to improve so children and families do not fall through the cracks.
- DFS now has a Title IVE Program effective October 1, 2014. The program is staffed with two individuals but will be expanding. Currently, children are referred for possible eligibility and determination is made by the IVE Program.
- The Family and Family Group Conferencing continues to be a relatively new services for DFS to utilize to empowerment and engage families to identify family issues and find ways in which child protective issues can be addressed. This approach is similar to the widely known family group decision making model, but the Nation took a traditional Navajo method of family peace-making used for many century by the Navajo people and developed the Family Conferencing. This service is within DFS. Family Conferencing occurs within 48 hours when a removal occurs. Having family involvement immediately after a CPS report has allowed children to be returned within 120 hours and have maintained out of placement as result of providing support services.
- DFS has implemented concurrent planning as a procedure written into the DFS Child Welfare Manual. This process has been informally practiced to achieve permanency for children with families taking greater responsibility for care of their child/ren. But, was formally documented when changes were made to the DFS Child Welfare practice. Permanency also occurs through adoption and/or guardianship.
- The DFS parenting skills curriculum has expanded to include Traditional Parenting Classes whereas caretakers are able to attend to increase their knowledge about culture. This helps the caretaker the significant stages of child development and important life stages such as baby's first laugh, reaching puberty are to name a few. The curriculum is required for all licensed foster care providers. The purpose to preserve or enhance cultural knowledge.
- DFS also uses the Family Wellness Curriculum for their parent skills training, it is a twelve hours session held bi-monthly. There are six topics covered which includes; 1) Parents in Healthy Families 2) Children in a Healthy Families; 3) Adult Relationships 4) As Children Grow; Change in Healthy Families; 5) Solving Family Problems 6) Sex, Drugs and You; Passing on Your Values to your children.
- The NCFS continued to provide adoption promotion and support services to their Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) unit by accepting referrals to match ICWA children who had a permanency plan of adoption. Some children were ultimately reunified with their parents or placed with relatives. Children who were not successfully matched with a Navajo family were placed with other families in which they found a permanent home.

Services are ongoing as described above with highlights that include a participant from Minnesota who attended the parent skills training to prepare to receive a kinship care responsibility. It was remarkable to see the commitment to the responsibility. The "Prudent Parenting" requirement

has also been added to the parenting curriculum and the Foster Care Handbook and is now required to be fulfilled prior to license.

In addition, DFS has started billing for Title IV-E and currently receiving reimbursements. DFS has implemented the JustWare Case Management System and actively entering cases. DFS submitted the first AFCARS data test elements in early April which met the requirements with minimal errors. The first biannual report was submitted on June 15, 2016 and will now be required to submit every six months.

WHAT STEPS WILL THE TRIBE TAKE TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT SERVICES TO IMPROVE CHILD OUTCOMES IN THE UPCOMING FISCAL YEAR?

- The reorganization of Division of Social Services where much emphasis has been placed on improving services for the overall wellness of the family unit. DFS will be implementing the remaining phase of their reorganization, which will allow for a more defined program and services based on target populations. For example, all child welfare services will be in the Child Well Being program and adult services are in the Dine Elderly Program. Supervisor and staff will be able to solely concentrate on a specific skill and knowledge as opposed to having to have knowledge from child welfare to geriatrics to financial assistance programs.
- The Children's Review Board, who provide technical assistance and recommendations regarding children in out of home care, have been provided more leverage to make recommendation to support the best interest of children. The team consists of a community member in good standing, Mental Health, Education that will provide a comprehensive review of the overall child wellbeing.
- DFS is working toward improving communication with local resources by attending meetings that involve child welfare on the Navajo nation.

At the end of June 2015, DFS has an established partnership with the Western Child Fatality Review Teams to target safe sleep of children and suicide prevention. CPS workers are required to assess the sleeping arrangement of children to assure that children have proper sleeping arrangement. Offer of free cribs and include in parenting skills training the campaign of safe sleep of children. Another initiative is babies back to sleep; that is teaching parents about the safe handling of children where children are required to lay on their backs when sleeping cannot have sleeping arrangement where parents their newborns in bed with them or sleep while holding an infant.

The effort to reduce suicide on the Navajo Nation, the OPVP Suicide Prevention (Building Communities of Hope) has been introduced to recognize the prevalence of suicide. A massive training in QPR was held with all Navajo Nation Employees who have all been certified to and trained to ask the questions and be able to refer to appropriate resources.

NCFS has initiated efforts to implement process for legal representation for adoptive parents to finalize adoption in meeting permanency quicker. This process meets the needs for those are requesting voluntary relinquishments and adoption of children.

➤ *Planned activities?*

- DFS will need to revise its procedures regarding credit checks for children aging out of foster care to better help staff understand the requirement and when it should be done.
- DFS will review their policies and procedures for child welfare to include new requirements under Title IVB including meeting the dental care needs of all children in out of home placement.

These procedures have been submitted as part of the IV-E plan; as well all the new legislations that have been introduced since Navajo Nation's implementation of IV-E program.

➤ *New Strategies for improvement?*

- DFS plans to turn some focus on teenage Pregnancy and when grandparents are forced to raise their grandchildren as a result of teenage pregnancy therefore prevention strategies include targeting the high schools to stress the importance of family planning. Lessons include preparedness of having a child; not only financially and maturity.
- DFS has started to use a Fatherhood Initiative to have fathers involved in their child's life. Information includes specific issues with regard to their role as a father during pregnancy, birth and development of the child. Including culturally accepts beliefs and practices as a father during pregnancy and child rearing.
- With the recent legalization of same sex marriage **across the United States**, DFS plans to focus on same sex parenting. This concept that is not yet easily acceptable and may cause issues for parents and child. Parents and children face the facts of being ostracized, bullied at school, and other unacceptable disrespected behaviors by the others. DFS social workers will need to be trained and knowledgeable in working with these family dynamics.

Services are ongoing

➤ *What method(s) will you use to measure progress?*

- DFs ~~will~~ tracks the number of training and services provided to the targeted population manually. ~~This will need to be included in the revised manual reporting process.~~ DFS uses the JustWare Case Management system to track outcomes and trends.

Describe revisions to existing goals and objectives

- Changes are stated in the CFSP template under 2016.

Changes are already recorded above

Describe the services to be provided in FY 2016.

➤ *Highlight changes and additions to services and program design.*

- DFS had their new Title IV-E Program become effective on October 1, 2014. Also implemented was the Alchini Bilnaanish Program (Foster Care) in which a supervisor was identified for the program and strict concentration can be recruiting, licensing and training foster parents/homes. This was also implemented on 10/01/14.

Changes are already recorded above.

➤ *Discuss how new/expanded services will help achieve program purposes.*

- Children and families in foster care will benefit from title IVE assistance including the DFS program to help generate additional funding and develop new resources for dependent children in Navajo.

Changes are already recorded above

For Tribes who have Tribal children under the age of five in foster care.

➤ *Provide an update on the activities that the Tribe has or will undertake in FY 2016 to reduce the length of time that young children under age five are without a permanent family?*

- Under DFS, Family Group Conference occurs with every substantiated report of abuse/neglect has resulted in addressing issues at the beginning of each CPS case before it escalates. This avoids the potential of removal and/or it increases maintaining children in the home. Families have expressed positive results of having family group conferencing. They expressed the benefits to see and recognize their own support system. The validation that is felt is when the support system is able to give specific commitment responsibility that will be assumed.
- At DFS a Permanency worker will monitor and provide intense services to reduce the amount of time children are in foster care. A weekly visit is recommended for the permanency worker.
- DFS will again, need to revise their Child Welfare Manual to include specific requirements for children under the age of 5 in foster care to reduce their length of stay.

The Foster Care Handbook has been revised to reflect legislative requirement.

Services in all categories will be ongoing, including all new initiative identified above.

Continue to coordinate with Specialized Foster Care Services where services are to establish permanency. By the end of June, a total of 1289 children were served, an average of 107 per month.

➤ *Provide an update of the activities the Tribe undertook to address the developmental needs of children under the age of five who receive services under the title IV-B or IV-E programs?*

- Focus has been directed at teen parents, first time parents and single parents wherein the parenting curriculum has included the developmental stage of children. The developmental stages are explained in the primary language the parent is most familiar. Effective efforts are made to demonstrate for parents how they can build on hand/eye coordination skills (motor skills) by playing with an infant child for example. Some simple steps workers have taken are having play toys available upon visits to the home where they engage the mother/father to play with the child.
- In accordance with ABBA, children receive physical exams within 24 hours of a child taken into custody and the developmental assessments are included in the examination.
- Foster parents and workers to receive training on identifying and providing services for the developmental needs of children in care of the Division.
- Any parent training includes the developmental needs of children.

Refer children (0-3) to the Growing in Beauty Program/First Things First; those meeting eligibility will service children who are pre-school age.

Prudent Parenting Skills has been included in parenting skills training to address the assurance of developmental activities appropriate for a given age.

Describe how the Tribe identifies which populations are at the greatest risk of maltreatment and how services are targeted to these populations.

➤ *Provide an update on how the Tribe identified which populations are at the greatest risk of maltreatment?*

- At DFS, through our monthly data, we determine the highest number of CPS reports for certain areas of the Navajo Nation. In 2014, the highest reports received in the central location of the Navajo Nation.
- Based on information received from field workers, children 0 to 3 year old seem to be the greatest risk for maltreatment, physical abuse and neglect. The DFS intake system identifies the population at the greatest risk of maltreatment are children that are 0-3 years old and younger.

Primarily the result of the data for FY2015 remains relatively the same.

➤ *How services are targeted to these populations?*

- DFS has begun trying to hire additional protective services workers to areas identified as having high number of CPS reports. However, due to internal issues, this has been challenging.
- When DFS intake has identified children are ages 0-3 years, the response time is a higher priority. The family conferencing/family group conferencing identifies the needs and case management monitoring is more frequent. Family Preservation services are provided with this population which means that services are more frequent and duration of contact hours is higher.

Children are referred to "Growing in Beauty" and "First Thing First", children meeting eligibility targets children who are pre-school aged.

COLLABORATION

Describe activities in the ongoing process of coordination and collaboration efforts conducted across the entire spectrum of the child and family service delivery system.

➤ *Provide a description of stakeholder or partnership involvement in the Tribe's child welfare programs in the past year and expected updates in the coming year.*

- DFS has ongoing meetings with Judicial, Prosecutors, Law Enforcement, US Attorney Office, Federal Bureau of Investigations, Public Healthcare Facilities, and local resources to coordinate services.
- Naataanii meetings that are facilitated by the Division of Social Services have developed a 5 year strategic plan identifying program improvement to address needs of Navajo children and families.
- The DFS child welfare manual was developed with input from Law Enforcement, Judicial, Prosecutors, and Navajo Department of Justice to improve coordination and ensure consistency of services. All participants took ownership of their responsibilities that they will be supportive of the procedures.
- The new JustWare Case management System is a coordination and collaboration effort between four DSS programs to have one central intake system and database that will be able to inform upper level management of what DSS services an individual or family is receiving.
- NCFS coordinates and collaborates with other DSS child welfare programs across the Navajo nation to provide services to Navajo birth mothers who have a plan of adoption for their unborn or newborn child.
- The NCFS Program continues to coordinate with state child welfare agencies by attending child and family team meetings that some states conduct within the first 72 hours of a child being taken out of home care. Attending these team meetings have been beneficial, not only for the child, but for the parents and relatives involved in the ICWA case. By having the program's ICWA worker attend these sessions, the worker has been able to advocate on behalf of the child and reminding states of the ICWA mandates in terms of notices, placement preferences, having case documents sent to the program, etc. By attending these sessions, the ICWA worker has made recommendations to have the state agency follow the ICWA placement Preference by placing the child with a relative caretaker the child may already know, rather than placing the child in a foster home.

In addition to the above continued coordination, the new initiative was the development of the Sex Trafficking Policies and Procedures. The ongoing coordination with Public Safety, Department of Education, Department of Health, Indian Health Services, FBI and State representatives.

Partnership with the Western Child Fatality where the goal is to decrease the rate of child fatality related to abuse/neglect, seatbelt/child safety, suicide and commercial products such as toys, equipment; etc.

Describe how Tribe has demonstrated substantial, ongoing and meaningful collaboration:

➤ *Between the child welfare agency and the Tribal or State courts, as appropriate, with regards to the development of the APSR*

- Due to limited number of Tribal Judges and Tribal Prosecutors, it has been difficult to arrange for meetings and collaborative worksessions to address the overall Navajo Nation Child Welfare System. Most meetings are held in response to crisis involving a case or field practice. However, coordination has improved significantly over the past few years and with the development of the DFS child welfare manual.
- Other coordination and collaboration with the State is done with the NCFS Program Manager, but mostly with the State of Arizona. The State of Arizona and New Mexico had contacted the Nation on the development of their CFSP. New Mexico encouraged participation in their taskgroup meetings during development.
- NCFS participated in the State of New Mexico's CFSR stakeholder's focus group meetings. By participating in their meetings, NCFS was able to provide feedback to the state's collaborative efforts with tribes in their delivery of services.
- Once approved, DSS will make the APSR available via the DSS website and reference this information during Navajo Nation and State of Arizona, New Mexico and Utah Intergovernmental meetings. The Navajo CFSP will continue to be available via the DSS website.

DFS was an active participant during the state of Arizona's APSR development. The state through invitation to the tribes wanted the voice of tribal organization at the table.

The Navajo Nation Division of Social Services hosts an annual tri-state meeting to include (AZ, NM, and UT). On a quarterly basis, meetings are held with each state, the state of NM is the most consistent and active.

➤ *Any Tribal actions being undertaken in response to a State's Child and Family Service review or title IVE improvement plans?*

- DFS and NCFS both participate in the State of Arizona's CFSR and New Mexico's CFSR. Thus far, no plans have been initiated to address the improvement plans.

During FY 2015, Navajo Nation participated in the Arizona and New Mexico IV-E case review. Currently, (Navajo Nation will once again participate in Arizona IV-E Review in July 2016)

PROGRAM SUPPORT

Provide an update on changes to or accomplishments in carrying out the Tribe's child welfare services staff development and training plans since submission of the CFSP

- The Department of Family Services has been able to accomplishment several of the training objectives of the Training Plan. A lot of concentration has been Title IVE and the requirements to refer a child for eligibility determination. Training has been conducted to DFS staff and partners. However, additional training still needs to occur with the Courts and Prosecutors as there are still issues such as completing Nun Pro Tuncs so trainings will be conducted before the end of the Fiscal Year.
- Once DFS implemented the Child Fatality Review Team, training will begin to staff on how to make referrals to the Team.
- DFS has been providing support to staff on training of the new Case Management System through this fiscal year and will continue until all current staff has been trained to use the system.
- DFS has been supporting the foster care program to train potential foster parents to become licensed.

[See training plan for updates](#)

Discuss the child and family services program's research, evaluation, or management information systems and quality assurance systems that will be updated or implemented in the upcoming fiscal year.

- Currently, DFS has accessed its information technology within all programs to update and upgrade outdated systems and servers, but still have several systems that need to be replaced.
- DFS will be reintroducing the Quality Assurance component to its services and programs. QA will help review and assess the quality of services provided to consumers of DFS. This includes review of children, adult and elderly cases, conduct various case audits and report on areas of strengths and improvement. Due to change in the DSS organizational structure, the QA program was temporarily placed on hold after the last staff to occupy the position retired.
- In 2013, the Division implemented a new Contract Compliance Section to monitor and review all programs and departments for compliance of their federal grants and state contracts.

[Navajo Nation Contract and Compliance Section has reviewed the IV-B \(February 2016\) and anticipating hiring a quality assurance staff. This position has remained vacant for two years. The implementation of the JustWare case management system allows for consistent practice such as standardized forms, it's online and there is accountability.](#)

Describe the technical assistance and capacity-building needs that the Tribe anticipates in FY 2016 in support of the tribe's CFSP/APSR goals and objectives.

➤ *Describe how capacity building services will assist in achieving the identified goals and objectives*

- The Department of Family Services plans to request for TA from several child welfare National Resource Centers (NRCs) or Quality Improvement Centers (QICs). This includes development of the Child Fatality Review Team and Diligent Recruitment of Foster homes.

DFS has reached out to the [Add previous statement](#)

CONSULTATION BETWEEN STATES AND TRIBES

Provide an update regarding the consultation between the State and the Tribe with respect to State compliance with ICWA.

➤ *Describe any concerns with respect to the ICWA consultation and compliance and any recommendations for addressing these concerns.*

- The NCFS Program has experienced on-going issues with states regarding ICWA case coordination and collaboration as mandated by the ICWA law. Such issues include, but not limited to: 1) Relative searches were not being conducted by state workers; 2) States do not provide ICWA notices to the tribe in a timely manner; 3) States do not provide adequate and timely court and case documents to the tribe; 4) States do not provide active efforts to parent(s) for reunification purposes; 5) States do not follow ICWA's Placement Preference, state workers have advocated for non-relative, non-Native American foster parents to adopt Navajo children and state courts have granted them accordingly; 6) States provide limited ICWA and IGA trainings to their state workers; 7) State workers have limited knowledge and skills in terms of developing and implementing culturally relevant case plans; and 8) State attorneys lacked knowledge of the ICWA and IGA, thus creating extra barriers to working with the tribe.

NCFS issues continue to remain the same; however there was greater effort to conduct quarterly case staffing with the state, conduct quarterly IGA meetings, and annual Tri-state meeting.

➤ *Describe the understanding gathered from State/Tribal Consultation as to who is responsible for providing protections for Tribal Children whether they are in state or Tribal care and responsibility.*

- On a daily basis, NCFS social workers conduct consultations with state child welfare agencies regarding tribal jurisdiction inquiries, e.g., exclusive jurisdiction definition in the ICWA law. In addition, the Navajo Nation has existing Intergovernmental Agreements with three states, Arizona, New Mexico and Utah. The IGAs are used as a guide to assist state and tribal workers in determining proper jurisdictions.
- Department of family services social worker use the Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) as to the responsibility for protection of children in the care they are getting in State license and /or group facilities
- IGA Identifies the Tribe's and State's responsibilities in addressing protecting children in foster care.
- Cultural exchange for State Agency workers is recommended on the reality of living conditions on the reservation.

New Mexico and Arizona has quarterly meeting to discuss ICWA issues and Protective Service Issues. In addition the state of UT TIIC holds quarterly meeting wherein stakeholders are invited as well as tribal leaders to the table.

Implement all new legislation requirements within the Navajo Nation to benefit all children within the jurisdiction of the Navajo Nation.

➤ *Describe how the Tribe has been consulted about the programs to be carried out under the CFCIP and explain the results of the consultation, specifically as it relates to determining eligibility for benefits and services and ensuring fair and equitable treatment for Indian youth in care under the CFCIP.*

- The Tribe recently consulted on the availability of CFCIP services provided by the State of Arizona.

Arizona and New Mexico have involved Navajo Nation has an open dialog to facilitate discussions/concerns of an identified child.

PLAN FOR DILIGENT RECRUITMENT OF POTENTIAL FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE PARENTS

For Tribes who have Tribal children in foster care. Discuss updates to the tribe's plan for the diligent recruitment of potential foster and adoptive families that reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in the tribe for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed.

➤ *A description of the characteristics of children for whom foster and adoptive home are needed*

- The DFS Foster Care Program has been able to completed 5 new foster home licensure this year. DFS has not hired additional staff to conduct foster home recruitment activities the positions have been identified and is awaiting the classification process. Recruitment and outreach activities have been completed at the DFS field offices a total of 96 outreach activities have been completed.
- DFS has been working on enhancing their current foster care program to increase the number of foster homes on the Navajo Nation. Revision Foster Home Standards was completed as a result in submitting a Title IVE Plan.
- Training required for foster homes includes cultural specific topics, and understanding Navajo traditions and teachings.
- DFS and NCFS will work together to enhance the foster care recruitment and retention under DSS.
- DFS Foster Care Program completed 45 new home licenses and 30 Kinship care license during the FY 2015.
- DFS established one foster care rate for the Navajo Nation and no longer have the disparities among the three states. DFS assisted 30 families with fire extinguishers and First Aid Kits to meet licensing requirements. Ninety seven families were financially assisted pending licensure to help alleviate financial hardship.
- Implemented the revised Foster Care Standard.
- Foster Care Training curriculum includes prudent parenting standards and APPLA when recruitment and placement of children occur.

➤ *Specific strategies to reach all parts of the community*

- With the reorganization of the foster care program under DFS, as a separate program it will be able to concentrate on licensing of foster homes. More staff will be hired to cover the remote areas of the reservation.

- With the reorganization of the foster care program under DFS, as a separate program it will be able to concentrate on licensing of foster homes. More staff will be hired to cover the remote areas of the reservation.
- Provided outreach services utilizing the media, coordinated with state organizations and increased the number of training provided. Training was targeted to the remote areas of the Navajo Nation; 48 trainings were provided with an average of 20 participants. One potential kinship care providers came from Minneapolis, Minnesota to attend the training with the final outcome of a license. Traditional Dine Parent Training was open to potential foster parents Navajo Nation Wide with a total of four training average participants of 20.
- Navajo Nation in partnership with Casey Family is collaborating with the State NM and Arizona to recruit Native American Foster Care Providers.

➤ *Strategies for assuring that all prospective parents have access to the home study process*

- Once referrals are received for potential foster homes, workers immediately provide services including completing comprehensive home studies to help a home become licenses through DFS. Adoptive homes are also certified through NCFS.

Once referrals are received or upon expressed interest for potential foster homes, an immediate explanation of requirements and appointment is made to begin the licensing process. Providing information of required medical examination and criminal backgrounds checks increases the likelihood of following through with the licensing process.

➤ *Strategies for training staff and community partners*

- According to the Training Plan, courses have been identified to train all DSS Child welfare programs and community partners on licensing foster homes.

The CIS (Community Involvement Specialist) provided 100 training services with total participation of 1000 on foster care services.

HEALTH CARE OVERSIGHT AND COORDINATION PLAN

For tribes that operate foster care programs

➤ *Describe the progress and accomplishments in implementing the tribes Health Care Oversight and Coordination Plan.*

- Every child that comes into the Nation's custody is asked about their health insurance, if none is made known than it is required in our procedures that a medical insurance is identified. Most of the children who come into contact with Social Services qualify for Medicaid therefore an application is submitted on their behalf.
- NCFS workers conduct home visits and interview relative caretakers when completing home studies and assesses for available community resources that families are able to utilize for their relative children who have been placed in their care. Appropriate referrals are made to community resources on behalf of the child. Follow ups are conducted to ensure the child is receiving services necessary.
- The ABBA, **DFS Child Welfare Services Manual and Foster Care Standard** requires **if a child is taking into physical custody the Division shall obtain a ~~a physical examination~~ medical clearance** within 24 hours. ~~as well as in the revised DFS Child Welfare Services Manual and foster care standards.~~ They address the needs of the child **(ren)** health care needs.
- All children in Foster Care received health exams in a timely manner. The challenge is the waiting **time** for the health exam **to be completed** at any of the health care facilities.
- ~~CPS workers ensure that Initial medical clearances are completed by a physician within 24 hours.~~ Regular health care **needs of children** are documented by case manager and coordinated with foster care and kinship caretakers.
- DFS social workers assesses each family and their health needs individually and then coordinates with case managers and foster parents to ensure children have their medical needs met to include but not limited to AHCCCS coverage, eye examinations, eyeglasses, medication regimen, dental care and developmental issues. **The case manager document in the case file as well as the case plan of any medical issues, prescribed medication, and regiments.** ~~One case manager takes a photo of the prescriptions to maintain in the case record, and then they keep a notation in the case record of any medication being taken and follow up with caretakers.~~ Case managers **inform and provide medical information with the caretakers.** The case manager researches and/or consults with psychiatrist **of side** for effects **of the medication on child.** **Any behavior issues of the child are monitored.** ~~The behavior of the child is monitored as well.~~
- ~~It is the case manager and the permanency worker who are responsible in ensuring the children are getting their health care needs with physical exams and dental exams in accordance with DFS CW Manual on the child(ren) case plan(s). All information related to the child's health care is documented and noted in the case plan, monitoring of medication is also recorded into the case plan and all other requested medical exams.~~

➤ *Describe any changes to the Plan that the Tribe, in conjunction with health care professionals, has determined are necessary.*

- At this time, DSS has not initiated any changes to the Health Care plan **is unchanged**. But, will consider input from other health care providers to determine any changes needed in FY 2016.

➤ *Provide information on the change or update to the Health Care Oversight and Coordination Plan, if any, or indicate if no changes have been made.*

- No changes have been made

DISASTER PLANS

Describe any changes needed to the Tribe's Disaster Plan

➤ *Has the Tribe been affected by a disaster in the past year?*

- There has been no reports of disaster **within 2016** where the disaster plans required implementation.

➤ *Describe how the plan was used and assess its effectiveness.*

- Not applicable as there was no reported disaster.
- The Division is in the process of revisiting and revising all Program Disaster Plans.

CERTIFICATION OF POPULATION COUNT

Certification count of number of children under the age of 21

➤ *Will the Tribe be updating their certification numbers?*

- No. The Nation accepts the certification count as provided by the Census Bureau.

Yes. The Navajo Nation is submitting a new population count for FY 2017. The Navajo Nation is utilizing the data that is provided by the Navajo Nation Department of Health Epidemiology Department.

TRAINING

Provide an update, if any, to the tribe's child welfare services staff development and training plan in support of the goals and objectives of the CFSP which addresses the title IVB programs covered by the plan.

OTHER INFORMATION REQUESTED BY ACF

Unobligated funds

- Since the reorganization of the Division of Social Services and the creation of Department of Family Services, the program has been able to strategize on the use of the funds by enhancing

and expanding existing programs. Prior to 2013 a separate department was responsible for determining the use of funds by each program.

- All DSS programs continue to experience several challenges including unable to hire qualified social worker staff especially where offices are very remote and rural due to the lack of housing, **lengthy assessment and background check process to which Division has no control**. Some offices have gone without a worker for more than year after the position continue to remain vacant. **The Navajo Nation Department of Personnel has reclassified all positions to include preferred and minimal qualifications affecting the recruitment and retention of staff**. Unfortunately, we do not project in having any saving in our positions, but when this occurs we work on rechanneling the funds for other services and sometimes we run out of time causing unexpended/unobligated funds.
- All DSS Programs were not anticipating any program income as reported in our SF 425 which added to our unobligated balance. In **order** to ensure the full expenditure of funds, we will continue to review our budgets quarterly and determine if other funds are needed for services if we continue to have savings in our vacant social worker positions due to challenges in hiring.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

1. **Training Judges and prosecutors: the importance of court language and review hearings for continued eligibility of children. (Capacity Building)**
2. **The importance of data collection and full implementation of JustWare Case Management System.**
3. **Region 9; On-site visits at a minimal one-time year.**
4. **Onsite/TA Capacity Building**

PLAN AVAILABILITY:

The IV-B plan will be available to the public and the states on the Division of Social Services Department of Family Services office and website:

<http://www.nndss.navajo-nsn.gov/>

The IV-B tribal APSR is shared with the following states:

Arizona: Minerva Gant (MGant@azdes.gov)

Katherine Guffey (kguffey@azdes.gov)

Utah: Alisa A. Lee (aalee@utah.gov)

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